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CaseID: 11472

Date: Thursday September 28, 2017

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Interim Comment

In terms of Section 38(8) of the National Heritage Resources Act (Act 25 of 1999)

Attention: Mr Khuliso Mudau

Nsovo Environmental Consulting

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1685

Basic Assessment process and Water Use Licence for the proposed expansion of Transnet railway loops in Thabazimbi, Ferrogate and Northam, within the jurisdiction of Thabazimbi Local Municipality in Limpopo Province Transnet SOC Limited proposes to undertake the expansion of railway loops at the aforementioned sites to accommodate 200 wagon trains. The expansion will entail the following: • The expansion will entail the following: • The development of two railway loops of approximately 3.4km, crewing facilities, seven culverts and associated infrastructure adjacent the existing railway line at Thabazimbi; • The expansion of the existing railway network of approximately 3.7km and (4) four culverts at Ferrogate; and • The extension of the existing loop by approximately 4km and two (2) culverts at Northam

Nsovo Environmental Consulting cc has been appointed by Transnet Freight Rail SOC Ltd to draw up a Draft Basic Assessment report for the proposed expansion of existing rail infrastructure at Northam, Thabazimbi and Ferrogate, in support of an application to obtain Environmental Authorisation in terms of the National Environmental Management Act, 107 of 1998 (NEMA) and the NEMA Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) 2014 Regulations, as amended. Nsovo Environmental have appointed Vhubvo-Hashu to undertake the Heritage Impact Assessment report as part of the SEIA application process.

The construction activities will include 3 new rail way loops, 2 at the Thabazimbi Station (3.7 km in length each), 1 at Ferrogate (3.75 km in length) and the expansion of an existing loop at Northam (4 km in length). The demolishing of existing culverts and construction of new larger ones on all the proposed loops, a total of 14 culverts. There will also be new Transnet service roads that are 4 m wide, 3 km in length at Thabazimbi station, 1.17 km at Ferrogate. Additional construction will include retaining walls and new ablution facilities and a 25kV overhead track power line and track switches. The Thabazimbi portion of rail is located on Portion 7 of the Grootfontein 352 KQ and Portions 2 and 7 of the farm Buffelshoek 351 KQ. The Ferrogate portion is located on Portion 19 and 20 of the farm Rood Edam and Portion 2, 6 and 7 of the farm Grootfontein 352 KQ. The Northam portion is located on Portion 1 of the farm Koedoesdoorns 414 KQ, Portions 2,7 and 11 of the

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farm Wildbeestlaagt 411 KQ and Portion 4 of the farm De Put 412 KQ. They all within the Thabazimbi Local Municipality of the Limpopo Province.

Magoma, M. June 2017. A Report on a Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment for the Proposed Polokwane Smelter SO₂ Abatement Project, Limpopo Province.

The author undertook a field assessment of the proposed railway loop construction area and identified 3 built structures older than 60 years. The structures include a bulk loading structure, a light pole and a railway line, all located within or near the Ferrogate station. No other historical or archaeological finds were identified.

The author recommends a phase 2 recording of the structures and as part of that a permit application to LIHRA in terms of section 34 of the NHRA, must be made to alter or destroy the historical structures.

Interim Comment

SAHRA Archaeology, Palaeontology and Meteorites (APM) Unit cannot provide comments on the HIA report as it does not contain the following:

- The authors declaration of independence, CV and the survey tracklog.
- The HIA needs to motivate why the Light Pole is a historical structure by providing dates (if available), historical maps/photos in the report.

The HIA report must be amended to include all the above.

Furthermore, an assessment of palaeontological resources was not included in the HIA report, nor was a full palaeontological report submitted to the case for comments. Therefore, SAHRA requires a desktop palaeontological study to be conducted by a suitably qualified palaeontologist.

A .kml file of the proposed development needs to be uploaded the GISLayer-Palaeosensitivity Layer map in the cases EDIT tab.

SAHRA will issue further comment once the reports are submitted to the case.

Should you have any further queries, please contact the designated official using the case number quoted above in the case header.

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Yours faithfully

Nokukhanya Khumalo
Heritage Officer
South African Heritage Resources Agency

Phillip Hine
Acting Manager: Archaeology, Palaeontology and Meteorites Unit
South African Heritage Resources Agency

ADMIN:

Direct URL to case: <http://www.sahra.org.za/node/406562>